

VZCZCXYZ0027  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #3178/01 2560922  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 130922Z SEP 06  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2118  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5653  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 6865

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 003178

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - DAVID FIRESTEIN  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS, CAMPAIGN TO OUST  
PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies continued to give significant coverage September 13 to former DPP Chairman Shih Ming-tech's sit-in rally to oust President Chen Shui-bian -- in some cases, nearly half of their front sections were devoted to the "Oust Chen" campaign. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, however, is the paper that gave the least coverage to the "Oust Chen" campaign and instead, focused its reporting on a possible general strike in an attempt to force Chen to step down; a "Support Taiwan" rally planned by the Taiwan Society on September 16 on Ketagalan Boulevard; and DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun's trip to the United States. The "Liberty Times" ran a banner headline on page five that read "Concerned about Taiwan's Political Situation, United States Upgrades Level [of Officials] to Meet with Yu."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an opinion piece in the pro-unification "United Daily News" cast doubts on whether the United States will be able to maintain a "neutral" stance with regard to Taiwan's current political situation. A "Liberty Times" analysis commented on the movement to oust President Chen outside the system, saying the move will only consume KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou, since Chen already has had nothing to lose. End summary.

### ¶3. U.S.-Taiwan Relations

"Yu Lobbying in Washington; Americans Support Bian?"

Loh I-cheng, a retired Taiwan diplomat, opined in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (9/13):

"... It is true that among the so-called 'neo-conservatives' who have been employed at high levels by President George W. Bush, few have a very shallow understanding of Taiwan. In particular, the DPP government has spent a huge amount of money over the past six years in making lawful donations via the Washington-based 'Formosan Association for Public Affairs' to assist the campaigns of American congressmen. It also spent government funds sending officials like Chiou I-jen, Tsai Ing-wen, and Joseph Wu to fly first-class to the United States and, accompanied by TECRO officials, to lobby U.S. congressmen. Over these years, such a 'slow poisoning' job must have harvested some results; it has more or less affected the U.S. perception of Taiwan's domestic political situation, at least on the middle, operational level.

"This does not mean that neo-conservative leaders like Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, or former Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz, who later transferred to head the World Bank, are also deceived. These people put their full attention on core issues such as Iraq and the war on terrorism, and let those below them worry about cross-Strait issues, which they do not view

as priority issues. Inside the State Department, even though former Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, in charge of the grand China area, met with Ma Ying-jeou openly when the latter visited the U.S., he still deemed mainland China as his main target at work. After Zoellick resigned and moved to work in the private sector, Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill became the key person in charge of China policy. Hill has a more profound knowledge of Japan and Korea than of China, and focuses his attention on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. As for cross-Straits issues, he can only trust the old team, and this is the situation [in the State Department] now.

"Both the ruling and opposition parties in Taiwan have shown excessive respect to the United States, and sometimes they think too highly of the AIT Taipei director. Former [AIT Director] Douglas Paal may be arrogant because of his talents or ability; he nonetheless faithfully carried out the State Department's instructions. ... In 2004, when the sit-in rally protesting the March 19 shooting of the president became unmanageable, Paal called on Lien Chan and James Soong to relay A-Bian's promise to organize a truth investigation committee, and thus resolved the stand-off. ... Given the fact that Chen's promise ... meant nothing, and plus the DPP government's all-out boycott, the truth [of the shooting] remains a mystery even now. Paal felt that he was just passing a message then and did not say he guaranteed that A-Bian would carry out his promise. The pan-Blue camp, on the other hand, was like a dumb person tasting bitter herbs, and was unable to express its complaints, and until now no one really knows what was going on then.

"In the DPP's eyes, however, this incident is the hard evidence showing that the United States secretly supports Taiwan independence. Stephen Young arrived following Paal's departure, and this made A-Bian very happy. Five years ago, when Young departed Taiwan in the capacity of the deputy director of AIT, A-Bian personally decorated him with the Order of Brilliant Star with Special Grand Cordon. Given the fact that Young was then just a charge d'affaires at a representative office of a country that has

no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, [to accept such an award] was actually a move that damaged diplomatic precedents. No wonder Young told [Tainan County Magistrate] Su Huan-chih that he doubted how long the sit-in to oust Bian would last under such a blistering sun.

No one outside knows whether the AIT Taipei Office has revised such a heartless and not totally objective view in its cables to the State Department over the past few days. This is the reason why some scholars doubt whether the United States is able to maintain a neutral stance. ..."

#### 14. Campaign to Oust President Chen Shui-bian

"Trying to Oust Bian outside the System Is Actually a Move That Consumes Ma"

Journalist Tzou Jiing-wen noted in an analysis in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] (9/13):

"Chen Shui-bian is a person who has descended from his political peak and whose term of office has started its countdown. When the sit-in to oust Bian started to target him and when its sole mission focused on the passive goal of forcing him to step down, this movement itself was doomed to become an asymmetrical 'battle.' Under the circumstances in which A-Bian has nothing to lose, the backfire effect naturally triggered by the 'Oust-Bian' movement is actually producing an impact on some other people.

"The first to bear the brunt of such a backfire effect is not the DPP leadership, as imagined by those people who want to oust Bian. This is because there are comprehensive and complicated factors involved with regard to whether the DPP will succeed in the Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral races, the legislative election, or even the next presidential election, the results of which cannot be determined by Bian's problem alone. If a utilitarian move like 'drawing a line [separating the DPP and Bian] can resolve such a problem, why [would the DPP] need its rival political party to remind it again and again? ...

"The 2004 election already showed a balanced division between two

major powers. Anyone who aspires to shoulder the responsibilities of leading the nation will have to vie for the key of the 50 'plus one' in order to succeed. The movement to oust Bian outside the system, which may look overwhelming on the surface, is actually a 'minus one' move, which is consuming the hesitant Ma Ying-jeou."

YOUNG